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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Note verbale dated 6 July 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and has the honour to attach the following documents issued at the outcome of the meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), held in Manama on 29 and 30 June 2009:

- GCC-ASEAN Joint Vision (annex I)
- Joint press statement of the First GCC-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (annex II)
- Memorandum of understanding between the Secretariat of ASEAN and the Secretariat of GCC (annex III).

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain further requests the President of the General Assembly to kindly circulate the above-mentioned documents as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 114 (c).

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Annex I to the note verbale dated 6 July 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

[Original: Arabic and English]

GCC-ASEAN Joint Vision

Manama, 30 June 2009

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the GCC and ASEAN member states, are building a partnership to ensure a peaceful, secure and prosperous future for our peoples in the two regions.

Our historical and cultural bonds and commitment to the aims and principles of the Charter of the GCC of 1981 and the ASEAN Charter of 2007, provide for the two organizations to develop close and beneficial relations.

We confirm the rights of all states to sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and principle of peaceful coexistence, good neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.

We aspire to build a new partnership in the economic, cultural, scientific and social fields, and to promote people-to-people contacts between the Gulf and Southeast Asia.

Together, we will work to build a new partnership of regional and global scope, enhance the exchange of experience and information, and commence concentrated efforts towards a framework cooperation so that we can work closely to tackle common challenges facing both regions for the future generations.

We recognize that enhancement of economic partnership between GCC and ASEAN could further strengthen these ties, including exploring the possibility of establishing a free trade agreement between the two regions, and agreed to work together to pave the way forward to achieve sustainable development in the two regions through the planning and implementation of joint projects in different fields, including economic, trade, investment, finance, food security, energy, transportation, telecommunications, industry, agriculture, environment, consular cooperation and through promoting the role and involvement of the private sector in our joint cooperation.

The GCC and ASEAN member states will work to establish a partnership through close cooperation and coordination at every level. We have agreed to undertake a study and make recommendations on the future relations between the two sides on (1) free trade area (2) economic cooperation and development and (3) culture, education and information.

Annex II to the note verbale dated 6 July 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

[Original: Arabic and English]

Joint press statement
The First GCC-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting

30 June 2009, Manama

1. The First GCC-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held on 29-30 June 2009 in Manama. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and H.E. Mr. Kasit Piromya, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand as the ASEAN Chair. The Meeting was attended by the Ministers, high-level representatives of GCC and ASEAN Member countries and the Secretary-Generals of GCC and ASEAN.

2. The Ministers noted that the GCC Charter of 1981 and the ASEAN Charter of 2007 provide for the two organizations to develop close and beneficial relations and, in this regard, the Ministers adopted a Joint Vision in order to provide a solid basis for developing mutually beneficial relations between the two regions.

3. The Ministers had an in-depth discussion and exchange of views on various international issues of common concern, in the spirit of South-South Cooperation, including the WTO – Doha Round and the international financial situation. They stressed the constructive roles of both sides in the promotion of peace, stability, prosperity, regional integration, sustainable development and community-building in their respective regions. The participants also discussed the development of mechanisms to support the strengthening and expansion of cooperation in many areas of mutual interest.

4. The Ministers underscored the importance of combating piracy at sea, in accordance with international law.

5. The Ministers recognized the potential of GCC and ASEAN in trade and investment, and agreed to seek further cooperation on these issues, including exploring the possibility of establishing a cooperation framework and a trade agreement between the two sides. In this regard, the Ministers also underscored the need for the private sector of the two regions to work closely together through the promotion of an ASEAN-GCC business forum.

6. The Ministers also recognized the importance of food security and development of joint ventures in agricultural productivity, supply and food standards, including halal food products, through greater investment, improvement on infrastructure and logistics as well as research and development.

7. The Meeting noted the potential for cooperation in the energy sector, including the exchange of information on hydrocarbon energy and alternative and renewable energy. The Ministers congratulated the UAE on the recent decision to select Abu Dhabi as the location for the interim headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

8. The Ministers expressed concern over the current financial and economic crisis and recognized the inevitable impacts on both sides. They also stressed the importance of further financial cooperation between international financial, economic and trading organizations and groupings. The Ministers, therefore, welcomed the result of the G-20 Summit in London and the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development.

9. The Ministers recognized the potential of the tourism industry, including the medical and wellness sector, and, therefore, agreed to develop joint promotion and marketing, through, amongst others, establishment of an official network and the promotion and planning of tourism-related activities, with the involvement of the private sector, as well as the promotion of investment in this area amongst the member countries of the two regions.

10. The Ministers emphasized the need to foster people-to-people ties at all levels. They recognized human capital development to be essential in narrowing the development gap. Promotion of dialogue among civilizations and cultures, and cooperation and establishment of linkages in education, such as exchange of students and academicians, as well as dissemination of information amongst member countries, were raised in the Meeting.

11. The Ministers acknowledged the increase of people-to-people contact, including the movement of ASEAN and GCC nationals between the two regions. In this context, the Minister agreed to enhance cooperation in consular matters.

12. The Ministers welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between GCC and ASEAN Secretariats and underlined the desire to explore additional areas of cooperation. They tasked the two Secretariats to develop a GCC-ASEAN two-year Work Plan to ensure effective cooperation and tangible outcomes, to be submitted and reviewed at the Second full-fledged Ministerial Meeting in 2010 in an ASEAN country.

13. The Ministers agreed to convene the next full-fledged ASEAN-GCC Ministerial Meeting in 2010 in an ASEAN country. In addition, they also agreed to have the full-fledged Ministerial Meeting in every two years afterwards, hosted alternately by a GCC or ASEAN country, while an open-ended troika meeting would be held once a year at the margin of the UNGA. The Ministers tasked the two secretariats to study and make recommendations on (1) Free Trade Agreement between GCC and ASEAN, (2) economic cooperation and development, and (3) culture, education and information.

14. The Ministers agreed to accredit their respective ambassadors to ASEAN in Jakarta and to GCC in Riyadh, respectively, in order to further enhance partnership.

15. The Ministers expressed their deep appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of Bahrain, and to the Government and people of Bahrain for their generous hospitality and excellent arrangements for the First GCC-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting.

Annex III to the note verbale dated 6 July 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

[Original: Arabic and English]

Memorandum of understanding between the Secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Secretariat General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf

The Secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, hereinafter referred to as "the ASEAN Secretariat", represented by the Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, of the part one

And

The Secretariat General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, hereinafter referred to as "the GCC Secretariat General", represented by the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, of the other part

DESIRING to take measures for cooperation and collaboration between the two Secretariats in the various fields;

RESPECTING the purposes and principles of ASEAN and GCC as set out in the ASEAN Charter and the Charter of the GCC;

And

REALIZING the need to enable a more effective and mutually beneficial cooperation between ASEAN and GCC;

RECOGNISING that this Memorandum of Understanding will not be legally binding under the International law;

Have reached the following understanding:

SECTION I
AREAS OF COOPERATION

The ASEAN Secretariat and the GCC Secretariat General shall through exchange of information, best practices and experiences initially cooperate in the following areas;

(a) Trade and Investment;
(b) Food security;
(c) Tourism; and
(d) Energy.

The two sides may in the future add any other fields of cooperation that has consulted with the Member States of each organization.

SECTION II
METHODS OF COOPERATION

1. The ASEAN Secretariat and the GCC Secretariat General shall draft a Work Plan to implement the above-mentioned areas of cooperation.

2. The Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council agree to undertake yearly consultations, or as and when necessary, at the Secretariats of the two organizations alternately.

3. Any further specific technical and sectoral cooperation shall be accommodated by supplementary Exchange of Letters between the two Secretariats as mutually agreed upon.

SECTION III
SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE

Any difference or dispute arising from the interpretation or implementation of this MOU will be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation between the ASEAN Secretariat and the GCC Secretariat General .

SECTION IV
AMENDMENT

This MOU may be amended by written consent of the ASEAN Secretariat and the GCC Secretariat General.

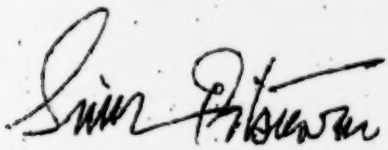
SECTION V
FINAL PROVISIONS

1. This MOU will be regarded as an administrative arrangement between the ASEAN Secretariat and the GCC Secretariat General.

2. The ASEAN Secretariat and the GCC Secretariat General will implement this MOU in conformity with their respective regulations, rules and administrative practices.

SIGNED in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, on the 30th of June 2009, in two original copies in the Arabic and English languages, all texts being equally authentic.

DR. SURIN PITSUWAN ABDULRAHMAN H. AL-ATTIYAH



Secretary-General of ASEAN Secretary-General of GCC